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Memorandum on the Occupation and Retention of Zeyla.

Memorandum by Mr. Sanderson, October 2, 1885.

A TRANSLATION of the Sultan's Firman relative to Zeyla will be found in Sir H. Wolff's despatch No. 12 of the 7th January, 1886, and in the Foreign Office Confidential Paper (4747).

It is dated the 30th June, 1875, and fixes the tribute to be paid by Egypt at £ T. 15,000, say 14,000*l.*

The India Office were of opinion that we should not recognize the validity of this Firman, as we had not admitted the claim of the Porte over Zeyla or the rest of the Somali Coast.

Accordingly, Sir H. Elliot, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, was instructed to remind the Porte that we had a Treaty with the Sheikh of Zeyla, to say that we did not desire to enter into a discussion on the effect of that Treaty, but would be prepared shortly to make a proposal to the Porte for an arrangement with regard to the whole of the Somali Coast.

We did make the proposal shortly afterwards, and entered into a Convention with the Khedive, acknowledging his jurisdiction over the whole coast on certain conditions. But we never succeeded in obtaining the Sultan's consent to the conditions on which the Convention depended, and it has consequently remained in abeyance.

From 1877 to 1884 the whole Somali Coast was *de facto* under Egyptian administration.

In 1884 the retirement of the Egyptians having been decided upon, the following despatch was

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addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople. :—

"Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

"(No. 178.)

"My Lord, "*Foreign Office, May* 29, 1884.

"Your Excellency is aware that it has been decided to withdraw, as soon as may be practicable, the Egyptian authorities and troops from Harrar, and that it is intended that this measure shall be followed by the retirement of the Egyptians from the whole of the coast which they have hitherto occupied from the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb to Ras Hafoun, including the ports of Tajourra, Zeyla, and Berbera.

"The political status of the coast eastward of Zeyla is on a different footing from that of the portion of the coast which extends from Zeyla to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb.

"The whole Somali Coast has since 1877 been *de facto* under Egyptian jurisdiction, but while the Porte has exercised for a considerable period rights of sovereignty over the territory between Bab-el-Mandeb and Zeyla, which, though never formally admitted by Her Majesty's Government, have not been practically disputed, the claims of the Sultan to sovereignty over the Somali tribes between Zeyla and Ras Hafoun have been repeatedly denied by Her Majesty's Government, and the Porte has never accepted the condition under which Her Majesty's Government were prepared to admit their sovereignty under the Convention of 1877 between Her Majesty's Government and the Khedive.

"If the Porte is ready to take steps on the withdrawal of the Egyptians to maintain its authority over Tajourra and Zeyla, Her Majesty's Government would be willing to recognize the authority of the Sultan over that part of the coast which is now under Egyptian jurisdiction as far as, and including, Zeyla, upon condition that the Slave Trade shall be suppressed, and that no part of the territory shall at any time be ceded to any foreign Power, and that no further duties shall be levied at those ports than are stipulated for in the Convention of 1877 between Her Majesty's Government and the Khedive.

"With regard to the coast eastward of Zeyla, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, on the withdrawal of the Egyptians, to make such arrangements as they may think desirable for the preservation of order and the security of British interests, especially at Berbera, from which Aden draws its chief supplies.

"I need hardly add that the abandonment of the Somali Coast by the Egyptian Government will put an end to the Convention made between Her Majesty's Government and the Khedive in September 1877, by which the jurisdiction of Egypt over this coast was conditionally recognized by Great Britain, but which has never come into effect in consequence of the Sultan having failed to comply with the condition contained in Article V of that Convention.

"Your Excellency will refrain from making a communication to the Porte in the sense of this despatch until authorized by telegraph to do so.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "GRANVILLE."

To Lord Dufferin, No. 30, Telegraphic, July 17, 1884.
Ibid., No. 239 A, August 1, 1884.

A communication in the sense of this despatch was made to the Porte in July, and on the 1st August his Excellency was further instructed to warn the Porte that, unless the Turkish Government took immediate steps to occupy Zeyla, it would be necessary for Her Majesty's Government to send a force there to preserve order.

On the 13th August the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs intimated that the Porte was prepared to send troops, but that he could make no official communication on the subject, as the assent of the Council of Ministers was necessary.

On the 22nd August the Turkish Ambassador in London was reminded that, if his Government did not move in the matter, Her Majesty's Government must.

India Office, August 25, 1884.

On the 24th August Major Hunter telegraphed that a British force had landed at Zeyla.

Sir E. Baring, No. 897, September 21, 1884.

About this time, Sir E. Baring recommended that no opposition should be offered to a French occupation of Tajourra, and on the 25th November, Musurus Pasha was informed that Her Majesty's Government would make no objection, if the Porte did not do so.

To Sir E. Baring, No. 335, Telegraphic, November 7, 1884.

On the 9th November Sir E. Baring was informed that we should continue to occupy Zeyla till the Porte took measures for doing so.

Sir E. Baring, No. 1000, Confidential, November 3, 1884.

A despatch from Sir E. Baring, No. 1000, Confidential, of the 3rd November, 1884, contains a full summary of the situation at that time.

Sir E. Baring, No. 718, Telegraphic, November 19, 1884.
Ibid., No. 1043, November 17, 1884.
Ibid., No. 1051, November 18, 1884.

In November the Egyptian Government made a formal notification to the Porte that they were compelled to withdraw their troops and civil employés from Harrar and Zeyla, and to abandon all the coast south of the Governorship of Massowah. "Under these circumstances," it was added, "the west coast of the Red Sea to the south of the Governorship of Massowah as far as Zeyla comes once more under the administration of the Porte."

Sir E. Baring, No. 1102, December 6, 1884.

In reply, the Porte addressed three Vizirial letters to the Egyptian Government.

In the first, explanations were asked respecting the appointment of Colonel Chermside as Governor-General of the Red Sea Littoral.

The second treated of the position of the French

on the Somali Coast, and stated that M. Ferry had informed the Turkish Ambassador that France did not intend to occupy Tajourra, but, in order to insure facilities for trade between Tajourra and Shoa, had made an arrangement with the Chief of Tajourra.

In view of the importance of the subject, and of the fact that Zeyla was under Egyptian administration, the Khedive was invited to bestow his constant attention on these localities, and to give his opinion on the arrangement above mentioned.

The third letter dwelt on the necessity of procuring documents, to show the manner in which the Ottoman Government came into possession of the Somali Coast.

Sir E. Baring, No. 750, December 6, 1884.

It was settled between Her Majesty's Government and that of Egypt that the Egyptian Governor of Zeyla should for the present retain his position of nominal Governor.

India Office, January 28, 1885.

With reference to the administration of the rest of the Somali Coast, the India Office, in January 1885, wrote that Lord Kimberley considered that the management of the coast from Ras Hafoun up to Zeyla should at once be placed in the hands of the Indian Government, and that the control of the Indian Government might, for convenience, be extended to Zeyla also, subject to relinquishment hereafter, if the Porte should eventually accept the proposals of Her Majesty's Government for re-establishing there the authority of the Sultan.

To Sir E. Baring, No. 44, February 6, 1885.

This was agreed to, but all questions touching the coast between Zeyla and Bab-el-Mandeb and those connected with the inland districts of Harrar were left to be dealt with by the Foreign Office.

Count Nigra, March 30, 1885.

In March the Italian Government offered to send troops to Zeyla and Harrar to assist in the maintenance of order.

To Count Nigra, April 18, 1885.

The offer was declined, and it was added, "Whilst thanking your Excellency for this offer, I have the honour to state that Zeyla is only temporarily occupied by British troops, and that Her Majesty's Government have undertaken to restore it to Turkey, whenever that Power is ready to reassume direct control there."

To Sir J. Lumley, No. 132, Confidential, May 4, 1885.

In May the Italian Government, in connection with their recent action on the Red Sea and Somali Coast, again proposed a joint occupation of Zeyla with England.

Lord Granville replied "that we felt ourselves bound by an honourable engagement towards Turkey as regards Zeyla, but that we were not pledged to hold the place indefinitely;" and he

added that he would again press the Porte for an early decision.

Mr. Egerton, No. 725, October 11, 1885.

In September Abu Bekr, the Egyptian Governor of Zeyla, was suspended by Vice-Consul King, and the latter's action was approved.

To Mr. Egerton, No. 347, October 27, 1885.

In February of 1885 the Law Officers were consulted as to whether the Khedive was still liable for the whole amount of the tribute to Turkey, in spite of the diminution of his territory by voluntary abandonment.

Law Officers, February 14, 1885.

They reported "that the territories having been ceded to the Khedive upon the terms of his paying a certain tribute to the Sultan, we are of opinion that that arrangement can only be got rid of, so far as the liability to the Sultan is concerned, by a new agreement with him, except it may be in the case of the territories being lost to Egypt by conquest.

"If the Sultan should consent to resume direct control over them, it would be a matter of agreement on what terms he did so, and certainly, in such case, it would be reasonable that the tribute should cease."

Law Officers, October 17, 1885.

In answer to a further reference in October, they reported "that, in our opinion, the Egyptian Government are not justified in declining to continue the payment of 14,000*l.* to the Porte on account of Zeyla, ... but should make provision in their yearly Budget for such payment until the Porte has accepted the retrocession of Zeyla, and relieved the Egyptian Government of the obligation in relation thereto."

Mr. Egerton, No. 807, Confidential, November 23, 1885.

In November a suggestion was put forward for the formal acquisition of Zeyla by a pecuniary arrangement with the Porte.

December 9, 1885.

Sir E. Baring furnished a Memorandum on the same subject in December, and expressed himself rather in favour of handing the place over to the Italians.

India Office, December 17, 1885.

The India Office, to whom the question was referred, replied "that Lord R. Churchill regards the British occupation of Zeyla as an arrangement made for the mutual convenience of this country, Egypt, and the Porte, in consequence of the inability of the Egyptian Government to maintain itself there; and he cannot admit that any liability is thereby imposed on the British or Indian Governments on account of the tribute of £ T. 15,000 agreed to by the Egyptian Government in 1875 to be paid to the Porte in respect of Zeyla."

Sir E. Vincent, March 11, 1886.

In March, 1886, Sir E. Vincent called attention to

the injustice done to Egypt in the matter of the tribute.

Sir T. Sanderson commented on this communication in a Memorandum, dated the 15th March.

On the 2nd July a further letter was addressed to the India Office. After summarizing the situation, it concluded, "It is, therefore, in Lord Rosebery's opinion, very desirable to ascertain distinctly whether the Indian Government would wish to obtain the permanent control over Zeyla, and in that case to come to a decision as to the terms upon which Her Majesty's Government should treat with the Porte for its acquisition. In any case, it would appear only equitable that Egypt should be relieved of the payment of the tribute, and of any shadow of responsibility which may attach to her in regard to Zeyla."

To India Office, July 2, 1886.

The India Office said that they must await the views of the Government of India.

India Office, July 14, 1886.

On the 24th September the Italian Chargé d'Affaires reverted to the subject of Zeyla, and said that his Government wanted the right to use Zeyla as the regular route to and from the interior, and to place a small body of troops there to protect it.

To Sir J. Lumley, No. 251, Secret, September 24, 1886.

Memoranda at this time by Brigadier-General Hogg and Major Hunter strongly recommended the permanent retention of Zeyla, and the latter submitted that 100,000*l.* would not be too large a sum to offer for it.

India Office, November 1886.

On the 25th February, 1887, the India Office forwarded copy of a despatch from the Government of India on the question of acquiring Zeyla from the Porte.

Ibid., February 25, 1887.

The Governor-General considered that the Indian Government should have a permanent and complete control over Zeyla.

Lord Cross added that, on the whole, he was inclined to think that a moderate money payment, to be contributed equally by the Imperial and Indian Governments, in return for a cession of sovereignty on the part of Turkey, would afford the best means of acquiring complete control over Zeyla, and of relieving Egypt, if possible, from the heavy tribute which she paid to Turkey on account of the place.

Sir H. Wolff, who was then at Constantinople, was accordingly authorized to sound the Porte on the subject if, in the course of his negotiations, a favourable opportunity should occur.

To Sir H. Wolff, No. 14, March 3, 1887.

In reply, he suggested making an arrangement for Her Majesty's Government to pay a lump sum as compensation for the tribute for a certain number of

Sir H. Wolff, No. 33, Secret, Telegraphic, March 16, 1887.

years, during which England would occupy Zeyla like Cyprus.

This proposal was viewed favourably by the Indian authorities.

India Office, April 5, 1887. To Sir H. D. Wolff, No. 23, Telegraphic, April 9, 1887.

Accordingly, on the 9th April the following telegram was sent to Sir H. Wolff:—

"You are authorized to suggest unofficially to the Porte cession of Zeyla to Her Majesty's Government for a term of years, in consideration of a lump sum as compensation for the Egyptian tribute.

"Ascertain and report amount which would probably be accepted.

"If there is any doubt whether it could, under Treaty of Paris, be ceded without the consent of the Powers, you might propose simply to accept a right to occupy and administer."

Sir H. Wolff feared that the word "cession" might create difficulties, so he chose the second formula.

Sir H. Wolff, No, 64, Most Confidential, April 12, 1887.

On broaching the subject to the Grand Vizier as his own idea the latter seemed favourably disposed, and said he would give an answer later.

Memorandum, June 30, 1887.

But the subject was not pursued any further. We do not appear to have communicated officially with the Treasury, but it is stated in an India Office Memorandum on Somali affairs that the Secretary of State for India, in communicating to the Viceroy of India the instructions given to Sir H. Wolff, mentioned that the Imperial Government were not prepared to make any contribution towards the purchase of Zeyla, and asked what was the maximum sum which the Indian Government was inclined to give.

To Sir W. White, No. 160, July 1, 1887. Mr. Portal, No. 395, July 18, 1887.

In July 1887 the small force of Egyptian black troops at Zeyla having asked to be relieved, it was agreed to allow them to leave; but it was arranged that the Egyptian flag should remain flying, and a small body of Egyptian police still remained there.

Circular, July 20, 1887.

On the 20th July a Circular was addressed to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Courts of the Powers who signed the Congo Act, instructing them to notify the establishment of a British Protectorate* over the Somali Coast from the point of Ras Jiburti, on the southern coast of the Bay of Tajourra, to Bander-Ziadeh on the 49th parallel of east longitude.

To Sir W. White, No, 171, July 20, 1887.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was instructed, in making the notification to the Porte, to remind them of the circumstances which

* The boundary between the French and British Protectorates was subsequently slightly modified by Agreement between the French and English Governments.

led to the British occupation of Zeyla, and to offer certain explanations with a view to make it clear that the action taken had not been with the object of prejudicing any question of territorial rights, but was due to the necessity of establishing some effective control over a country which is an important source of supplies to a neighbouring British military port—Aden.

The French Chargé d'Affaires having asked for explanations as to the imposition of a duty at Zeyla by the Resident at Aden, and having stated that the French Government had always considered that Zeyla had been occupied by Great Britain upon the same footing as Egypt, of which Zeyla was a dependency, he was informed, in reply, that the Egyptian Government had withdrawn from Zeyla, which was now under the Protectorate of Great Britain, as had been lately formally notified to the French Government.

To Count d'Aubigny, October 22, 1887.

It was added that the Assistant Resident at Aden administered the affairs of Zeyla under the authority of Her Majesty's Government, and had power to impose duties in the exercise of his functions as Administrator; that there existed no governing authority at Zeyla but that of Her Majesty's Government, and that, if the Egyptian flag was still hoisted over the Custom-house, no political significance was to be attached to the fact.

In November a Vizirial letter was addressed to the Khedive.

Sir E. Baring, No. 542, November 29, 1887.

This letter, after alluding to the fact that Zeyla formerly belonged to the Sandjak of Hodeida, stated that the Sultan wished to come to an arrangement with His Highness, by which that place should be again brought under the direct authority of the Sublime Porte. It ended by inviting an expression of the Khedive's views.

Sir E. Baring reported that His Highness was disposed to accept this proposal on condition that Egypt should be relieved from the yearly tribute of £ T. 15,000.

To Sir W. White, No. 139, Telegraphic, December 14, 1887.

Sir W. White was told to ascertain the object of the Porte in moving in the matter, and was authorized to intimate quietly that, as no notice had been taken of Her Majesty's Government's offer in 1884, they had now no intention of giving up Zeyla.

Some difficulty was experienced in advising as to the Khedive's answer, owing to the necessity of referring to India.

Sir E. Baring, No. 574, December 18, 1887.

But the Porte pressed, and the following is the substance of the answer which was sent.

The Khedive accepted the proposal that Zeyla should revert to the Porte. He intimated that Egypt would thus be liberated from the duty of paying the tribute, and recalling the fact that for some time England had occupied and guarded the place, he concluded by saying, "Your Highness will, therefore, judge how far a communication with England is unavoidable before the change can be effected."

India Office, January 2, 1888.

The views of the Government of India as to the conditions on which the Porte might be allowed to resume occupation were received by telegraph in January 1888:—

"*The Viceroy of India to Viscount Cross.*

"(Secret.)

"(Telegraphic.) "*December* 29, 1887.

"Your Lordship's Secret telegram of the 7th: Zeyla.

"After full consideration, we still hold that retention of Zeyla under British control at moderate cost would be valuable; but we do not think heavy payment solely from Indian revenues for acquisition justifiable in Indian interests. Transfer of Zeyla to Turkey open now to objection already stated regarding any European Power, and harmful in commerce and Slave Trade. If transfer inevitable, Turkish occupation should be in force. Conditions in letter 29th May, 1884, to Ambassador at Constantinople, generally appropriate. Right of appointing Consular Agents should be retained. We suggest, however, it is sufficient for the present to merely tell Nubar Pasha Her Majesty's Government has no objection to cancelling Sultan's Firman of 1875, which, indeed, we have never formally recognized. He might remind Porte that administrative connection of Egypt with Zeyla was severed in 1884, as notified at time, and that since then sole governing authority at Zeyla has been and is ours. Regarding tribute, we think Egypt has no grievance against us. (See India Office letter to the Foreign Office of 17th December, 1885.) We are not responsible for bad bargain of 1875. Zeyla does not pay expenses. Utmost we should concede to Egypt is estimated surplus of entire Somali Coast Protectorate, or two to three thousand pounds annually in respect of Porte's position, defined in Foreign Office letters to Ambassador, dated 29th May, 1884, and 20th July, 1887. Sultan seems to have practically allowed any rights he may have had to lapse. Despatch follows."

Ibid., January 16, 1888.

On the 16th January the India Office communicated a Memorandum on the subject of the connection of the Porte and Egypt with Zeyla.

To India Office, January 25, 1888.

In acknowledging its receipt, the following observations were made:—

"I am to express Lord Salisbury's thanks for the paper. With regard to the suggestion made at the conclusion,

that the question whether Zeyla can properly be considered as forming part of the Ottoman Empire coming under the guarantee of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, I am to say that Lord Salisbury doubts the utility of referring to the Law Officers a question which has not practically arisen, and may never arise.

"The question at the present moment is, in Lord Salisbury's opinion, not that of the abstract and original title of the Porte. It must be looked upon as turning upon these two points.

"In the first place, while Her Majesty's Government are in occupation of Egypt, and responsible for the peace and safety of the country, are they not entitled, if they see fit, to object to the retrocession of a dependency of Egypt which they have now been administering for a considerable period in consequence of the omission of the Porte to take measures for the purpose when invited to do so.

"In the second place, have they not a right to require that the whole coast from Suez to Guardafui shall be treated on the same principles, and to decline to abandon the occupation which, with the implied consent of the Porte, they have established, so long as similar occupations by other European Powers remain undisturbed."

To Sir W. White, No. 12, January 16, 1888.

The Turkish Ambassador, about the same date, made a formal proposal that the Governor of Yêmen should take over Zeyla and garrison it with Turkish troops.

Ibid., No. 27, February 13, 1888.

Sir W. White was instructed to draw the conversation to Zeyla, to say that there was a rumour that another European Power had expressed a wish to occupy it, but that England did not contemplate making any change in respect to the place.

India Office, February 16, 1888.

The India Office concurred in this communication, but disclaimed responsibility for the tribute.

To Sir W. White, No. 62 A, February 27, 1888.

On the 27th February, 1888, Lord Salisbury made the following communication to the Turkish Ambassador:—

"The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

"(No. 62 A.)

"Sir, "*Foreign Office, February* 27, 1888.

"In the course of conversation to-day the Turkish Ambassador referred to the proposal which he had made to me on the 16th January last (as recorded in my despatch No. 12 of that date), that the Governor of the Yêmen should take over the occupation of Zeyla and garrison it with Turkish troops. His Excellency asked if I could give him an answer for communication to the Porte.

"I said, in reply, that the subject was not one which Her Majesty's Government could discuss at present. It was closely connected with the general question of the British occupation of Egypt, of which country Zeyla had, a few years ago, been a dependency. It was still further complicated by the fact that, since Zeyla had been

evacuated by the Egyptians and taken charge of by Her Majesty's Government, in the absence of any arrangements for the purpose by the Porte, two other European Powers, Italy and France, had undertaken the occupation of important points on the shores of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, on territory to which, in our opinion, the Porte could make out a more definite and valid title than it could to Zeyla.

"Under these circumstances, the only answer I could give was that the discussion of the proposal was not opportune at the present time.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "SALISBURY."

India Office, February 28, 1888.

In this month a despatch was received from the Government of India detailing the terms which they were prepared to offer to secure the retention of Zeyla, as well as the conditions on which they thought it might be replaced under Turkish administration.

As the Treasury declined to contribute, they put aside the idea of a purchase at the sole cost of Indian revenues, but they offered to pay to Egypt the estimated surplus—about 2,000*l.* a-year—of the revenue of the entire Somali Coast, if such a contribution would tend to remove the difficulties of the situation. The despatch *in extenso* will be found in the Appendix marked "A."

To Sir W. White, No. 139, May 2, 1888.

In May Rustem Pasha renewed his request for the evacuation of Zeyla, and was again told that the moment was not opportune.

India Office, July 6, 1888.

In June the Resident at Aden pointed out that the surplus revenue of the whole Somali Coast was larger than had been estimated by the Government of India.

To India Office, July 13, 1888. India Office, July 26, 1888. To India Office, August 13, 1888.

Some correspondence ensued as to its disposal, Lord Salisbury recommending that, after necessary expenditure, it should be accumulated on a suspense account and invested.

Mr. Portal, No. 286, Confidential, August 24, 1888.

In August Riaz Pasha asked Mr. Portal if he could tell him exactly the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the payment of the Zeyla tribute, viz., whether they were willing to be brought into direct communication with the Porte on the subject, in the event of Egypt discontinuing to pay the tribute on the ground of the occupation of Zeyla by Her Majesty's troops, or whether they would prefer that Egypt should continue to pay and not raise the question. Mr. Portal replied that he gathered that Her Majesty's Government wished to leave Egypt entire liberty of action in the matter.

This reply was approved. In September Sir E. Baring was authorized to take steps for the withdrawal of the Egyptian flag from Zeyla, and after the 5th October, 1888, it was not flown there.

To Sir R. Baring, No. 64, Telegraphic, September 28, 1888.

In November the withdrawal of the small body of Egyptian police still left at Zeyla was authorized.

Sir E. Baring, No. 345, November 7, 1888.

To Sir E. Baring, No. 225, November 29, 1888.

Mr. H. M. Durand, C.S.I., Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, paid a visit to the Somali Coast in the spring of this year on his way back to India, and the following remarks are quoted from a Memorandum which he drew up after this visit:—

India Office, July 13, 1888.

"If it be conceded that a withdrawal from the whole coast is impracticable, can we, as some have suggested, content ourselves with holding Berbera and Bulhar, from which comes the bulk of our supply of live stock,* and let Zeyla go? This course seems at first to offer some advantages. We might thereby hope to put an end to all our troubles with the French and to the claims of the Turks upon us. I believe such an idea is illusory, and that, far from putting an end to our troubles, we should in the end increase them. We are not, perhaps, bound in honour to protect the Ecsa and Gadabursi (I hope not, for we have already handed over some of them), but if we let any European Power occupy Zeyla instead of us, there will be an end to all security in Somali-land. The objections to such a course have already been stated many times, and after discussing them in detail on the spot with those best qualified to judge, I have not the smallest doubt that they are sound. Whatever the conditions attached to the transfer, a Turkish occupation, with the French 15 miles off, would very shortly be a French occupation, veiled or overt, and our position at Berbera and Bulhar would soon be made difficult, if not intolerable. A free port at Zeyla would greatly injure the Berbera and Bulhar trade, our reputation among the tribes would, of course, be lowered, arms would get into the country, and the Somalis would become unmanageable, and in time of war we might find our supplies of food and camels suddenly fail us, and altogether we should have at Berbera and Bulhar the same trouble as we are now having at Zeyla, but in a very aggravated form. We should also lose the Harrar trade, with its possible future development, and the Zeyla meat supply, which might be very valuable in case of temporary trouble in Berbera. I need not add that the news of any such arrangement would be received with dismay by the Italians and all other friends of order and common-sense upon this coast. As to handing over Zeyla to Italy, as Sir Evelyn Baring recommended, the French would, I feel certain, object so vehemently that the transfer would be found impracticable. In short, it is clear to my mind that the retention of Zeyla is essential to our supremacy and security on the Somali Coast, and that it should not be given up to any Power whatever.

* Nearly three-fourths.

"If Her Majesty's Government take this view, we shall have to come to some arrangement with Turkey. We may be sure that even if the Porte were willing to acquiesce in our occupation and let their claims slide, the French would keep up the agitation. It is now their only apparent chance of getting rid of us. In negotiating with Turkey two facts should be remembered. The tribute paid by Egypt for Zeyla, 14,000*l.* a-year, represented not the value of Zeyla itself, but the value of Harrar, the possession of which was profitable. Zeyla itself never did, and would not, for a long time to come, bring in any material revenue. At present it pays little more than the expenses of a very cheap administration. Secondly, the tribute was paid, not for the town of Zeyla, but for the district, which extended from Ras Maskun on the east to Tajourra on the west. Most of this district is now in French hands, and the revenues of Tajourra are destroyed. It seems to me that the simplest way to settle this question would be by telling the Turks that the time for putting forward their claim has gone by, and that in the interest of our Somali Protectorate we must remain in Zeyla; but if such an answer be impossible, then the circumstances mentioned above should be allowed due weight. In that case I would give a lump sum down, of which, in fairness, Her Majesty's Government should certainly pay half. Aden is no mere Indian dependency. In India I would not refuse to pay 100,000*l.* Interest on this sum would, I think, shortly be covered by the surplus revenues of the Somali Coast, which revenues we can never count upon collecting in peace and security if Zeyla passes out of our hands. And if we add to the account the advantages of supplying Aden—not only the troops and followers, but the navy and mercantile marine—with good and cheap mutton and beef, instead of buying the animals required in a worse and more distant market, the sum suggested does not seem excessive. Apparently, Aden now takes from the coast rather more than 2 lakhs' worth per annum of beef and mutton, chiefly mutton.

"I would not offer to pay to Turkey the surplus revenue of the coast. If we administer it carefully, the estimated surplus of 2,000*l.* a-year will be more than doubled in a very short space of time. This year, according to the figures supplied to me, the Customs receipts amount to about 1,70,000 rupees, and the direct charges of all kinds to something under 1,00,000 rupees. We had better not tie ourselves down, and, moreover, we had better not give to the Porte anything which can look like a tribute. We should buy out the Turkish rights once for all, if pay we must.

* * * * * *

"The Turkish claims to Zeyla should be firmly resisted, and, if necessary, bought out. In one way or another we must retain the place, for, if it goes, we shall have destroyed the security of our Somali Protectorate, a long strip, of which we must keep the end firmly fastened down. I may add that, if India pays for Zeyla—or,

indeed, in any case—the Government of India had better take over the whole management, and thus bring all the coast under one hand. Egypt has really nothing more to do with Zeyla, and we are financially responsible already.

"If we act on these lines we may hope to retain, without expense, a satisfactory and advantageous position upon the southern coast of the Gulf of Aden.

"I am aware that the opinion I have expressed in the foregoing paragraphs conflicts to some extent with the views of the Government of India, as set forth in their despatch to the Secretary of State of the 31st January. But it may perhaps be argued that this despatch was primarily a reply to an Egyptian demand for relief or compensation on account of the Zeyla tribute, and, further, that the position is not what it was two months ago. The recent Agreement with France brings her so close to Zeyla that practically, whatever conditions might be laid down, a Turkish occupation of Zeyla must now be a French occupation. From this point of view, I cannot but think that the despatch does not attach sufficient importance to the political disadvantages which the abandonment of Zeyla would involve. Moreover, though I could not during my stay in Aden collect sufficient data for an exact estimate of the future revenues and expenses of our Protectorate, I think it is clear that we may fairly look for a surplus considerably larger than the sum hitherto accepted as probable, namely, 2,000*l.* For example, a year ago General Hogg seemed to think that, under favourable circumstances, the receipts at Zeyla would rise to 30,000 rupees a-year, whereas the average struck on the receipts for ten months, from April 1887 to January 1888, shows a monthly revenue of 4,618 rupees. Similarly, the receipts at Berbera and Bulhar, which General Hogg hoped a year ago to maintain at 1,00,000 rupees, show an average for the same period of 9,677 rupees. This is undoubtedly satisfactory, and it is to be remembered that during the period in question there has been a good deal of trouble in the interior. In the future, with a settled Government at Harrar, there is reason to hope for a further improvement. No doubt, when all is said, the surplus will not for some time be much more than sufficient to pay the interest on a sum of 100,000*l.*, especially if the French injure the Zeyla trade and force us to forego our customs receipts at that point. But for the sake of the supply of Aden alone, it seems to me that we should be right in accepting that prospect; and it is possible, to say the least, that we may develop hereafter a prospect very much more favourable. I would therefore stick to Zeyla, which is essential to the security of Berbera and Bulhar, and would, if necessary, pay 100,000*l.* to buy out the Turkish claims."

Sir E. Baring, No. 386, Secret, October 30, 1888.

On the 30th October Sir E. Baring wrote at length on the subject, submitting that, as there appeared to be no doubt that Her Majesty's Government intended to remain in permanent possession of Zeyla, it was on many grounds desirable to acquire a legitimate title to the place, and that negotiations should be resumed with the Porte on the basis of the payment of a sum of money.

The sum of 100,000*l.* mentioned by Mr. Durand appeared to Sir E. Baring reasonable, and he anticipated that, under improved administration, the Zeyla revenue would soon furnish a surplus sufficient to cover the interest on such a capital sum.

(See Appendix B.)

A copy of this despatch is annexed to the Memorandum.

To India Office, November 22, 1888.

It was referred to the India Office, Lord Salisbury remarking that "great weight attaches to Sir E. Baring's arguments as to the unjust and illogical nature of the present arrangement, . . . and that he would be glad to authorize Sir W. White to propose a payment in commutation of the tribute whenever he may think the moment propitious for entering upon the subject."

Under these circumstances, inquiry was made as to what was the largest capital amount that the Government of India would be ready to pay from Indian funds for this purpose, in view of the promising condition of the Somali Coast revenues.

India Office, December 6, 1888.

The India Office concurred in the importance of the acquisition by Her Majesty's Government of a legitimate title to the possession of Zeyla, and said they would ascertain what amount the Government of India would be prepared to contribute.

India Office, August 29, 1889.

The reply of the India Government has now been received.

It is to the effect that they are ready to contribute a maximum of 50,000*l.* upon certain conditions.

In communicating this decision Lord Cross stated that, if it be determined by the Imperial Government to make an offer to the Porte as a commutation of the Egyptian tribute, and for the cession to Great Britain of its territorial rights at Zeyla, he was prepared in Council to contribute a maximum sum of 50,000*l.* from Indian revenues for that purpose, on condition that this payment extinguishes as against the Government of India all claims on the part of Egypt or Turkey to any portion of the territory on account of which tribute of 14,000*l.* a-year is payable.

To Treasury, September 5, 1889.

The question has now been referred to the Treasury, with the inquiry whether, in the event of

its being deemed advisable to approach the Porte on the subject, the Lords of the Treasury would be prepared to contribute a similar amount, viz., 50,000*l.*, from Imperial funds.

G. D.

Foreign Office,
September 12, 1889.

APPENDIX (A).

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 29.)

India Office, February 28, 1888.

Sir,

IN continuation of my letter of the 16th February, and with reference to Sir J. Pauncefote's letters of the 16th and 25th January, I am desired by Viscount Cross to forward herewith, for submission to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a letter from the Government of India, dated the 31st January, 1888, detailing the terms on which they would be prepared to secure the retention of Zeyla, and the conditions under which they think Her Majesty's Government might replace it under the direct administration of the Porte.

2. As the commercial value of the Somali Coast Protectorate is insignificant, and as Zeyla alone does not pay its expenses, the Government of India are still of opinion that the purchase value of Zeyla is dependent on political and military considerations. They would rather not see any foreign European Power there, and they consider that, in particular, Turkish rule would probably be hurtful to commerce and the suppression of the Slave Trade, weak to repel tribal aggression or encroachment, liable to be subject to French domination, irritating to the Italians, and unpopular with the Somali tribes. Further, an unfriendly or an incompetent ruler at Zeyla might equally disturb the British Coast Protectorate, and damage, if not close, the Berbera source of supply to Aden.

3. But, in the judgment of the Government of India, neither the military nor the political considerations which render the retention of Zeyla justifiable are sufficient to warrant the application from Indian revenues of a large sum in the purchase of Turkish claims or rights over Zeyla; and, as Her Majesty's Government have declined to contribute, the Government of India now definitely abandon the idea of purchase on the terms originally suggested.

4. The views thus expressed by the Government of India are generally in accordance with the determination which it is understood Her Majesty's Government have arrived at not to make any change in the status or occupation of Zeyla, and Lord Cross has, in this Office Letter of the 16th February, stated his readiness to concur in this decision.

5. The possibility of Turkey seeking to transfer Zeyla to some other Power is also adverted to by the Government of India, who point out that Turkish sovereignty over Zeyla has never been formally admitted by Her Majesty's Government, and that a British occupation has been established there upon ample notice being given to the Porte. If insistance on these facts should lead the Turkish Government to demand the full tribute from Egypt on account of Zeyla, the Government of India urge that neither England nor India are in any way responsible for the arrangement of 1875, fixing the "extravagant" Zeyla tribute, and they do not recognize that India is under any obligation to relieve Egypt of this payment.

6. They would not object, however, to pay to Egypt the estimated surplus—about 2,000*l.* a-year—of the revenue of the entire Somali Coast Protectorate over its direct charges, on the ground that Zeyla is an important factor in the efficiency of the whole Protectorate.

7. Should the Marquis of Salisbury consider that this proposed contribution would assist in removing any difficulties attending the continued occupation of Zeyla by Her Majesty's Government, Lord Cross would be willing to sanction the payment of the surplus revenue of the Somali Coast Protectorate to Egypt, as suggested by the Indian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. A. GODLEY.

Inclosure.

The Governor-General of India in Council to Viscount Cross.

Fort William, January 31, 1888.

My Lord,

IN continuation of his Excellency the Viceroy's Secret telegram of the 29th December, 1887, we have the honour to address your Lordship with reference to the terms which the Government of India is prepared to offer to secure the retention of Zeyla, and to the conditions on which Her Majesty's Government might withdraw and let it pass unde that direct authority of the Porte.

2. We have received more complete information from the Government of Bombay relating to the commercial value of Zeyla than we possessed when we addressed your Lordship in our despatch of the 18th January, 1887, but it merely confirms our belief that the commercial value of the Coast Protectorate is insignificant, and that Zeyla alone does not pay its expenses.

3. We still think, therefore, that the price to be paid for Zeyla is dependent on political and military considerations. We would rather not see any foreign European Power there, and in particular Turkish rule would probably be hurtful to commerce and the suppression of the Slave Trade, weak to repel tribal aggression or encroachment, liable

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to be subject to French domination, irritating to the Italians, and unpopular with the Somali tribes.

4. An unfriendly or an incompetent Ruler at Zeyla might equally disturb our Coast Protectorate, and damage, if not close, the Berbera source of supply to Aden. But neither the military nor political considerations which render the retention of Zeyla to be desired are, in our opinion, of sufficient weight to justify payment from Indian revenues of a large sum in buying out Turkish rights or claims over Zeyla. We are ready to give the annual surplus of the revenue of the whole Protectorate over its direct charges, or, if Her Majesty's Treasury had agreed to share the cost, we would have contributed a capital sum towards purchasing the rights or claims for not more than 100,000*l.*; but, unless a lump sum payment of less than this will be sufficient, we would now, since Her Majesty's Treasury declines to contribute, definitely put aside the idea of a purchase at the sole cost of Indian revenues.

5. If Her Majesty's Government decide to withdraw in favour of the Porte, the conditions specified in Lord Granville's letter of the 29th May, 1884, to Her Majesty's Ambassador seem to us generally appropriate. They provide that the Slave Trade shall be suppressed; that no part of the Zeyla territory shall at any time be ceded to any foreign Power; and that no further duties shall be levied at Zeyla than were stipulated for in the unratified Convention of 1877 between Her Majesty's Government and the Khedive. We presume that the right of appointing British Consular Agents would at the same time be retained; and we should wish the Turkish occupation to be in force sufficient to support an effective administration, and to be accompanied by strict control over the power of local officials.

6. We apprehend that, as between Egypt and the Porte, and Egypt and Her Majesty's Government, the question of Zeyla is one of money. Egypt is anxious to be rid of a very bad bargain, which cannot be alienated without the Sultan's consent; the Porte would be reluctant to lose 14,000*l.* a-year; and Egypt pleads that Her Majesty's Government is morally bound to recoup Egypt. As between Her Majesty's Government and the Porte, however, we do not regard the question as one of money. On the occasion of the Egyptian evacuation, Her Majesty's Government offered Zeyla to the Porte, with a warning that, if Turkish rule were not established, British interests would have to be guarded at Zeyla by Protectorate arrangements. The Porte did not act upon the offer and warning, and the result is the existing British Protectorate. As far as the Porte is concerned, Her Majesty's Government is now entitled, we submit, to remain as the only governing authority at Zeyla, at any rate until satisfactory terms for the transfer of the place are put forward by Turkey.

7. We have now indicated answers to the specific questions put in your Lordship's telegram. But we would suggest that the answer to Nubar Pasha might be that Her Majesty's Government has no objection to the cancellation of the Sultan's Firman of 1875, which, indeed, as far as we are aware, Her Majesty's Government has never formally recognized. Egypt can, we would suggest, be further advised to point out that the severance of its administrative connection with Zeyla was notified to the Porte in November 1884, and that the severance should equitably be followed by the remission by the Sultan of the Zeyla tribute which Egypt has so far been paying.

8. We have not overlooked what Lord Rosebery pointed out in July 1886—that there is nothing in the present position of affairs to prevent negotiations being set on foot by Turkey for the transfer of Zeyla to some other Power. But it must be remembered that the sovereignty of Turkey over Zeyla has never been formally admitted by Her Majesty's Government, and that a British occupation has actually been established, with ample notice to the Porte. The result of insistance on these facts might no doubt be that the Porte would continue to stand upon the letter of its rights, as pronounced by the Law Officers of the Crown, and demand the full tribute from Egypt. We would urge, however, that Her Majesty's Governments in England and India are in no way responsible for the bargain of 1875, by which that extravagant tribute was fixed; and we must traverse the argument that India is in any way called upon to relieve Egypt of the injustice of any longer paying the Zeyla tribute. So far from losing now by the British control over Zeyla, Egypt is in reality saved the trouble and cost of administering a barren possession. If Zeyla alone yielded a profit, the surplus might be made over to Egypt as a help in paying the tribute. Similarly, we should not object, as we have said, to paying Egypt the estimated surplus of the revenue of the entire Somali Coast Protectorate over its direct charges, on the ground that Zeyla is an important factor in the efficiency of the whole. This surplus may be about 2,000*l.* a-year, and this amount seems to us more than Egypt has any right to claim by way of recoupment from Indian revenues.

9. We inclose a Memorandum prepared in our Foreign Department which enters more fully than is convenient in the limits of a despatch into the history of our conection with Zeyla, and the facts which have led to the conclusions we have stated.

We have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.
G. CHESNEY.
A. R. SCOBLE.
C. U. AITCHISON
C. A. ELLIOTT.
J. WESTLAND.

APPENDIX (B).

Sir E. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—Received November 12.)

(No. 336. Secret.) *Cairo, October 30, 1888.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Lordship certain observations in connection with the affairs of Zeyla.

There can, I conceive, be no doubt that Her Majesty's Government intend to remain in permanent possession of Zeyla. Even those who, like myself, were inclined to doubt the value of Zeyla as a British possession, will probably admit that it would now be practically impossible to surrender the place. Moreover, it cannot be doubted that the occupation of Zeyla possesses certain advantages which are fully stated in Mr. Durand's Memorandum of the 11th March, 1888, especially the advantage of avoiding too close neighbourhood at Aden with any European nation. These advantages were held by the Government of India, who more than any other authority is qualified to speak on the subject, to outweigh any counter-balancing disadvantages which are involved in the retention of this port. Further, the question has been finally settled by Her Majesty's Government. The respective spheres of English and French influence on the Somali Coast have been defined, and authority has been given to hoist the British flag at Zeyla. For all political purposes it may be said that the Turkish connection with Zeyla, which was heretofore exercised through the Khedive as the Sultan's feudatory, has ceased to exist, save in respect to one point of considerable importance. The Sultan still continues to claim from Egypt the Zeyla tribute, which was fixed by the Imperial Hatt of the 1st July, 1875, at £ T. 15,000, or rather less than 14,000*l.* Up to the present time the Egyptian Treasury has paid the instalments of the tribute as they came due.

Under these circumstances, I venture to submit to your Lordship that it would on many grounds be desirable to acquire a legitimate title to the possession of Zeyla which could not be called in question.

Mr. Durand says in his Memorandum to which I have already alluded: "We offered the place to Turkey in 1884. She did not then avail herself of the opportunity, and perhaps, as has been argued, she cannot complain now if we decline to evacuate. We never acknowledged her rights at best, and they are of a doubtful character."

The complicated history of the phases through which Zeyla has passed are fully narrated in various Memoranda, which have from time to time been drawn up both at the India Office and the Foreign Office. I do not think that I need dwell on this branch of the subject, but I would observe, whilst fully recognizing the accuracy of Mr. Durand's description which I have quoted above, that I hardly think that any arguments based either on the absence of a formal recognition of Turkish sovereign rights, or on the offer made in 1884, are of a very conclusive nature. Hostile critics would, without doubt, regard the British occupation of Zeyla as one of those acts of political piracy which have rather come into vogue of late years, but which I conceive it is by no means the interest of the British Government to encourage.

This aspect of the question lies, however, somewhat outside my purview of the situation, and further, I am not prepared to urge that, if this argument stood alone, it would of itself constitute any very strong plea for taking action in the matter.

I am more particularly concerned with the bearing of the Zeyla question on affairs in Egypt. Regarding the question from this point of view, I have the honour to submit the following observations to your Lordship.

The Egyptian authorities are exceedingly sore on this subject. They regard themselves, and with some reason, as in the position of a farmer who has been evicted from his farm, but who is still obliged to pay an extravagant rent to his landlord, whilst the actual occupier pays no rent, and appropriates to his own use the net proceeds of the estate. Moreover, they consider that the evicted tenant is the ward of the actual occupier, and that the former may reasonably look to the latter for the protection of his financial and political interests. There can, in fact, be no doubt that whilst the Government of India have got what they want, viz., the possession of Zeyla, and the Porte has got what it probably cares most about, viz., an annual revenue of 14,000*l.* a-year, a very great injustice is being done to the Egyptian Government. The actual loss of money is a matter of importance in view of the embarrassed condition of Egyptian finances, in the well-being of which Her Majesty's Government is much interested. Apart, moreover, from the actual financial relief which would be involved by discontinuing the payment of the Zeyla tribute, I cannot but think, when our position in Egypt is considered, and when, further, it is remembered that we are the actual occupiers of Zeyla, that a strong moral obligation rests on Her Majesty's Government to take such steps as will relieve the Egyptian Government from the payment of this money. The continuance of the present state of things is very hurtful to our reputation and influence in Egypt. I may add that both the Budget, on which the Financial Convention of 1884 was based, as well as Lord Northbrook's Budget, presupposed the cessation of the Zeyla tribute.

I understand, both from Mr. Durand's Memorandum and from the India Office letter of the 25th February, 1887, that the Indian Government would not be disinclined to pay a lump sum to the Porte for the acquisition of its rights.

Under all these circumstances, I venture to submit to your Lordship that it would be

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advisable to resume negotiations with the Porte on this subject with a view to acquiring a properly constituted title to Zeyla on payment of a sum of money.

As to the amount to be paid, the sum of 100,000*l.* mentioned by Mr. Durand appears to me to be reasonable. The Zeyla financial position is steadily improving. I observe from Colonel Stace's last Report that the value of the entire trade rose from 1,280,797 rupees in 1886-87 to 2,151,598 rupees in 1887-88. The revenue, which was 38,099 rupees in 1886-87, rose to 55,251 rupees in 1887-88, whilst the expenditure fell from 38,834 rupees to 37,487 rupees. It is true that, as is pointed out in the Resolution of the Bombay Government of the 18th September, 1888, a change in the form of accounts swelled the surplus of 1887-88 by 9,000 rupees. Further, I understand that these figures do not include military and public works' expenditure. It is clear, however, that, as might have been expected, the Zeyla trade and revenue are progressing, as the result of improved administration, and it may reasonably be hoped that before long there will be a surplus sufficient to cover the interest on a capital sum of 100,000*l.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. BARING.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

MEMORANDUM on the Occupation and Retention of Zeyla.

Foreign Office,
September 12, 1889.